Reflection CE 5150

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One concept we must keep foremost in our minds is that we are living in an upload world, as much as a download world. Consider these facts: 72 hours of video are uploaded to You Tube every minute. From the Nielson/McKinsey Incite website we learn that at the end of 2011, there were 181 million blogs from around the world. This number is up 36 million from five years ago in 2006. Further evidence of our upload and online sharing habits are revealed by examining the growth of Twitter. The 21 billion tweets that accumulated between 2006 and 2010 were donated to the Library of Congress to be archived. Together these numbers confirm the vastness of our online collaboration throughout the networked global community. If our goal in education is in fact to prepare students for the world, then we are compelled to equip them with skills to participate fully in their digital world.

My final project was not shared online, but it will meet the NETS standards for communication and collaboration. The students prepared Power Point slides with embedded video clips. All slides will be combined into a final presentation to share with multiple audiences. The audio portion of their video is a script the students prepared to discuss current events in a specific biome. The current event news was both positive and negative. They used digital tools to gather facts for their scripts. The students were also given instruction in preparing citations so they were in compliance with using the information ethically. This is a NET standard in the area of Research and Information Fluency.

As I reflect on the final project, I am pleased that they were able to show a level of proficiency is such a range of NETS standards. While the project didn’t have a high level of bells and whistles to showcase the latest web 2.0 tools, it did prompt the students to step-up the complexity of their skills using the digital tools available in Power Point.

I believe this project enhances communication because the final Power Point presentation will be saved and added to a digital library of resources the school community can access to gain information about the topic of biomes. The classroom teacher plans to share it immediately with her grade level colleagues. In addition, she plans to use it next year as an introductory activity to spark interest in the unit. As a cooperating instructional partner, I am pleased that the classroom teacher will share this across the grade level. I predict that the Power Point slides embedded with video clips will encourage her colleagues to try a similar project in upcoming units. Now both the classroom teacher and myself can mentor others and help them create multimedia resources. This is one of the best ways to help create excitement about incorporating digital resources into lessons.

The level of student engagement was high throughout the project. It was not without some frustrations. Videotaping the current event news segments required a special lesson in communication skills. Essential elements such as eye contact, and rate of speech were carefully examined. The students viewed videotaped examples to learn what the expectations were for the final video clips. They actively sought out credible online sources when they were gathering facts. They showed a high level of comfort in making decisions about the appearance of the slides and chose appropriate fonts and background colors that enhanced the ability to read the materials.

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